

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

The following listing, if entered, replaces all prior versions of the claims in the present application.

1. (Previously Presented) A source node comprising:  
a network interface operable to transmit packets and to receive packets;  
a processing unit in communication with the network interface, the processing unit being operable to generate a request packet that includes a request to provision a route for data packets, wherein the request packet includes:  
a value indicating the number of nodes included in the route;  
a value indicating the number of rings included in the route;  
a sequence number for each node in the route with respect to the source node;  
an identifier for a destination node; and  
an identifier for each node in the route.
2. (Original) The source node of claim 1, wherein the request packet further includes:  
a value representing the bandwidth required to establish cross-connects along the route.
3. (Original) The source node of claim 1, wherein the identifier for each node in the route is included in a route subfield, and the route subfield includes:  
a network element identifier for each node;  
a port identifier for each node; and  
a timeslot for each node.
4. (Currently Amended) The source node of claim 1, wherein the network interface is a **Bi-Directional Line-Switched Ring (BLSR)** network interface.
5. (Original) The source node of claim 4, wherein the source node is further operable to broadcast the request packet using the BLSR network interface.